

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel non-elected Claims 9-25, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Please amend Claims 1-3 as shown below. A list of claims presented during prosecution is as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A protein ~~having an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 and functionally active homologues thereof~~ represented by SEQ ID NO:1 or a protein having an amino acid sequence wherein one amino acid residue in the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 is deleted, added, or substituted, and the protein binds to Nef.

2. (Currently Amended) A protein as claimed in claim 1 having an amino acid sequence where one ~~or more~~ amino acid ~~residue(s)~~ residue in the amino acid sequence ~~represented by SEQ ID NO:1 is/are~~ deleted, added, or substituted.

3. (Currently Amended) A protein ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ having an amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1.

4-8. (Previously Canceled)

9-25. (Currently Canceled)

26. (Original) A method to diagnose the development of AIDS comprising using a protein according to claim 1 as an index.

27. (Previously Amended) A method to diagnose the development of AIDS comprising using a DNA molecule which encodes a protein represented by SEQ ID NO:1 or which encodes a protein having an amino acid sequence where one amino acid residue in the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO:1 is deleted, added or substituted, wherein said protein binds to Nef.

*Planned*  
28. (Original) A method for screening for a therapeutic agent against AIDS comprising using a Nef-binding property of a protein according to claim 1.

